

SALE OF CORPUS CHRISTI (TEX.) HOSPITAL

FEBRUARY 11, 1925.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. GIBSON, from the Committee on World War Veterans' Legislation, submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany S. 2100]

The Committee on World War Veterans' Legislation, to which was referred (S. 2100), authorizing the sale of the United States Veterans' Hospital at Corpus Christi, Tex., having duly considered the same, hereby recommend that the bill do pass.

The Government, at the close of the World War, acquired the property by lease. It was later purchased at the price of \$120,000 from the Corpus Christi Hotel & Land Co. Before its purchase a tropical storm did considerable injury to the property, and it has remained in that condition ever since. It has not been used by the Government.

Under the provisions of public act 326 (40 Stat. 1303) the property was taken over from the Public Health Service by the Treasury Department May 31, 1918. By Executive order dated April 29, 1922, the operation, management, and control of certain designated hospitals, which included the Corpus Christi Hospital, were transferred to the Veterans' Bureau. Under the act of June 7, 1924, this transfer was made permanent.

The hospital is located on a beach, is subject to inundation, and is comparatively small in size. There is no intention of using it. Other hospitals in that section are located as follows: Legion, Tex.; Muskogee, Okla.; Fort Bayard, N. Mex.; Alexandria La.; and Algiers, La. These are of sufficient capacity and so favorably located as to take care of all demands in that section of the country.

The following letter from the Director of the Veterans' Bureau is self-explanatory.

MAY 7, 1924.

Hon. ROYAL C. JOHNSON,

*Chairman Committee on World War Veterans' Legislation,
House of Representatives, Washington, D. C.*

MY DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: On January 9, 1924, I transmitted to the chairman of the Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds of the Senate a draft of a bill authorizing the Director of the United States Veterans' Bureau to sell the United States Veterans' Bureau hospital reservation at Corpus Christi, Tex. On the same date I sent a similar letter with a draft of this bill to the chairman of the Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds of the House of Representatives. On January 21, the bill submitted to the Senate committee (S. 2100) was introduced by Senator Shipstead; at approximately the same time Mr. Langley introduced a similar bill (H. R. 5266).

So far as I am informed the House Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds has taken no action with respect to the bill introduced by Mr. Langley. I observe, however, that the bill S. 2100, having passed the Senate, was yesterday referred to your committee.

The reservation at Corpus Christi has not been used as a hospital by the United States Veterans' Bureau since its transfer to the bureau. It was first held and used by the Public Health Service under a lease made by the War Department. In pursuance of the authority granted by the act of March 3, 1919 (40 Stat. 1303), the Treasury Department entered into a contract purchasing the property at a stipulated price of \$140,000. Before the title was conveyed to the United States a severe tropical storm caused considerable destruction and damage to the buildings and other property, and as a result of this destruction and damage the purchase price was reduced to \$120,000.

The property was transferred to the control of the United States Veterans' Bureau by Executive order, dated April 29, 1922. No attempt has been made to restore the buildings to the condition which they were in before the storm. The property is now in charge of a caretaker and is not being used for a hospital or for any other purpose. In view of the location of the property I am of the opinion that it is not suitable for hospital purposes.

Taking into consideration these facts and also the expense of restoration, I recommend that authority be granted to sell and to convey the property and to have the proceeds thereof paid into the Treasury of the United States as miscellaneous receipts. This recommendation has received the approval of the Senate by the adoption of the bill submitted to accomplish that purpose.

I appreciate the interest that your committee has already shown in recommendations which I have made on other matters relating to the bureau and request that this interest be extended to the favorable consideration of this bill, as I am convinced that the sale of this hospital reservation would be in the best interests of the Government.

Very truly yours,

FRANK T. HINES, *Director.*